

## Somehow Still Alive by Hellbroke

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Alternate Universe - Billy Hargrove Survives, Angst, Cheating, F/M, Hurt & Comfort, Implied/Referenced Cheating, Post-Break Up, Reconciliation, Suicidal Thoughts, Teen Angst, Toxic Relationships, Triple Drabble, Unhealthy Relationships

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**Summary:**

After the gruesome events of Starcourt Mall, Billy was supposed to be dead. Yet, by some miracle, that isn't the case.

# 1. Chapter 1

## Author's Note:

Follow me on Tumblr, where my work is also posted!  
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Inspiration & Song That's Meant to Play Throughout  
This Series: "Well I Wonder" by The Smiths

If he concentrates enough, he can still feel the trembles beneath the layers of his skin, contracting to make room for the centipede-like creature that once crawled along the contours of his lean muscle. It's nothing but a ghost now, he tells himself. An instinctual twitch embedded in his subconscious. Nothing but a memory of what it felt like to easily boil under the sun when he was under the creature's control. Now, simple sunburns just feed into the paranoia.

Paranoia. It's just paranoia, he reminds himself, it'll correct itself somehow.

Somehow. Everything accounts to the adverb of 'somehow' now. Somehow he still has a job as a lifeguard, even though it isn't as warm as it once was now that autumn is drawing near. Somehow he hasn't been cuffed in the back of a police cruiser. Somehow he didn't kill those kids, his sister. Somehow everyone, except him, can walk around the streets of Hawkins like none of this ever happened—like he wasn't just feeding these people to that *thing*. And despite you having to help Steve Harrington and his strange group of friends, somehow, you have yet to show your lovely face since that night of Starcourt Mall.

Why would you? The reason this whole mess started was because Billy had been on his way to some secluded motel room to hook up with a middle-aged woman, knowing your shift at that hole-in-the-wall diner would be ending soon and you'd be sitting on the curb

outside waiting for a ride.

Billy shifts his blind glare away from the chlorine pool water to survey the area.

Clouds consume the once vibrant skies, draping the area in a cool grey and adding to the stillness at hand. There are a couple kids with snorkels and flippers diving into the deep ends, a couple mothers lined up in their usual spot but none have yet to turn to him, and a young couple deep in conversation while the third wheel awkwardly dips his feet with a boombox stationed beside him. It's relatively quiet, and Billy can hear the faint [romantic tunes](#) drifting from the cheap speakers.

His head sinks forward once more, eyes dripping to his tank top which hides the grotesque scars, as the song plucks at his heartstrings to inspire the somberness he's tired of feeling.

He tries to remind himself that *that* too is just a memory now—bare skin between lavender-scented sheets as this fresh-faced band spun on your turntable like a drug. It's been three months. Three whole fuckin' months since he woke up from his two-week long coma at the hospital, and yet he still needs to convince himself that you, too, are just some ghost that continues to haunt him.

A couple sprinkles hit his calves as the few people begin to pack up, and he laughs.

Somehow he's still alive, and he wonders why.

## 2. Prequel: Keep Me in Mind

The tiles squeak underneath your dirty Converse, and the cushion is lumpy on the worn chair you sit on. It's fifteen to ten but instead of spending your Friday night at some random party, drinking to whatever terrible radio song was playing, you're here, at Hawkins' empty hospital; and, you still cannot believe how you've managed to convince the receptionist at the front desk to let you in past visiting hours.

Maybe the nurse noticed the purple that lined just beneath your lower lashes from countless of nights spent staring at the light of night shift across your ceiling as the hours ticked by. Maybe a tangled bit of hair was peaking out of the hood that was supposed to cover the neglect of a brush and she saw it. Maybe your voice failed you with a warble and you're just oblivious to the fact that you aren't exactly the best actress. Either way, the nurse pitied you and you'll still continue to deny that your charming smile is no longer intact.

Or, maybe it's because you're the first person that's come to visit this Billy Hargrove in days.

Your muscles relax as your back leans against the chair. You're drained; not because you haven't slept in what felt like days or because you walked miles just to get here, but from the broken switch in your head that has the power to mute your racing thoughts.

You don't reach out to him, nor run your fingers across his arms or brush your lips across his. Instead your eyes trail along the wilted bouquets that surround the endless tubes and needles that prick Billy's delicate veins. Various operating machines do as they're meant to; oxygen steadily flows through his nostrils. Monitors beep, some from reasons unknown to you; green lines spike on the screen; both a little slower than normal, but there's a steady pattern nonetheless.

Billy hasn't opened his eyes once since that night and nobody seems to care.

A traumatic experience you thought would bring everyone closer together only expanded the cracks of the fault line. Some moved away. Others have the ability to laugh and function like they've been through this before, like all the blood and gore had just been part of a midnight showing down at the theater.

Oh God...it had been drenched all over you. Billy's crimson blood kept cascading into your eyes no matter how much you were wiping it away with the back of your hands. It just wouldn't stop.

Your thumb plays with the Walkman in your pocket, and you carefully reveal two paychecks worth of technology. After carefully untangling the wires, you place the headphones over his curly hair and deaf ears. This past week, REPEAT has become your favorite button.

You're not sure what you expect to accomplish by playing [this particular song](#) for him. Maybe you want him to dream of you and all the flowers that bloomed. Maybe you hope to hurt him like he's hurt you: to be tormented, as a prisoner behind sewn eyelids, by his insatiable lust for other women even when he swore you were the one for him. What you do know is that you want him to keep you in mind, even when this is a final goodbye.

### 3. Finale: All I Am

The rain splatters against the cement, coloring every inch of it a darker tone. Everyone has since packed away their belongings and hauled ass to the safety of their homes, but not Billy. The sun-protecting parasol isn't enough to defend against the storm that chills him to the bone. Besides, the prickles on his skin numb the phantom sensation of what was once the 'mindflayer,' so Max calls it.

He's allowed to lock up the community pool, clock out, when the weather calls for it. But, the keys remain in the empty office, right next to the locker room. Where his head once made impact with glass, was held in the air by some constricting force from some girl who knew things she shouldn't. It just doesn't make sense, and why does he feel like an intruder to a body that's been his own?

Talk around him, especially the snippets he'd catch from the gossiping older broads, point the locker room vandal on anonymous hooligans.

Billy thought, for whatever reason, the invisible forces of the universe were protecting him from being someone's bitch in prison or from the mercy of the Grim Reaper. That isn't the case, as he realized within a couple weeks of his release from the hospital. The universe just had something else left in store for him.

Karen no longer lounges around, women don't really flock to him like they used to, and apparently, you abandoned him when he needs you most. The only one who *really* ever talks to him is his thirteen-year-old step-sister...he might as well just finish what the universe was too chickenshit to do for this was the real punishment; being alive and forgotten is far worse than being buried six feet under.

Heavy drops beat against the sloshing pool water, the sky's moisture and chlorine becoming one. It'd take him just three steps to near the edge of the swimming pool. Take a fourth steps and he'd topple into it. Resist flailing and he could sink all eight feet until his lungs shrink then swell.

These four steps are just another invader in the already crowded noggin of the brooding lifeguard, yet when the thought calls to him, he retreats just before the drop. Instead, he waits.

He waited for the nurse to bring him a bland sandwich and a pudding cup. He waited for his injuries to heal. He waited for the OK from the doctor to go home. He waited for a sign, other than the punctures, that any of that happened—Max had to convince him. He waits for the courage to follow through with the fantasy that haunts his shifts. He waits for *something*. Anything.

It's all he is. Fate has reduced him to this.

Through the heavy rain, you spot him perched up on his throne. Flapping of the umbrellas and the flirts of what's to become roaring thunder muffle the slapping of soaked sneakers. As you near his prone form, you despise yourself for giving into the gloom, going soft, for letting the yearning in your nerves to take over. Hell, it doesn't matter how you put it—you lost and he won. He always wins.

Billy notices the pair of sneakers enter his line of vision and prepares to scold whatever kid had decided to trespass, but freezes when he makes out the person to be a woman, you. Four of his senses go blind.

Strands stick down the contours of your cheeks, water falling in a stream as it drips down the ends just like his do. Shivers rack up your spine through the slop of your sweater; you wonder how he's perched up like it's nothing.

Your physical appearances haven't changed much, yet your souls are strangers.

Your mouth opens, thinking all the bottled emotions will spill out but they don't and you mentally curse at yourself for not preparing in front of a mirror beforehand. You hadn't thought facing your ex-boyfriend would be this quiet.

You expected anger, with spit flying through teeth like bullets; a cold shoulder, with ice toppling down it like a roof during Christmas time. Anything that touches some sort of resemblance familiar to you and old Billy.

Instead, Billy's just sitting there...staring at you...waiting... What do you say to that?

Your teeth find comfort in gnawing on your bottom lip before you suck in a breath of humid air, hands sliding into the comfort of back pockets. "How you holding up?"

Cracks begin to appear on Billy's stagnant expression. It wasn't much, but it was something.